

## EVALUATING WEB PAGES CHECKLIST

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### QUESTIONS TO ASK WEB SEARCH RESULTS

WHAT'S AT STAKE? HOW RELIABLE DOES MY INFORMATION HAVE TO BE?

- "Good enough" is good enough     $\not\approx$  Involves money, laws, health     $\not\approx$  Acceptable to my instructor

WHAT CAN THE URLS TELL YOU, IN THE SEARCH RESULTS LIST?

- Who "published" it? Look at the URL up to first /
- Is it a personal page? Look for ~ % **members aol geocities users**
- What type of organization is behind it? Would limiting to certain types help? **site:org OR site:gov**
- non-profit (**org**)    univ/college (**edu**)    gov/t (**gov, mil, us**)    a business (**com**)    foreign (**uk, jp**, etc.)

WHAT CAN THE PERIMETER OF THE PAGE TELL ME?

- Who or what agency is the **author**?
- What **values** do they stand for?
- What are their **credentials**? What right to offer an opinion? Why believe them?
- What is their **bias**?  
    **"About us" "Sponsors" "Philosophy" "Biography" "Who am I" No background info**  
    **If none of the above, truncate back the URL one / at a time.**
- Is it current/recent enough?  
    **Last updated date old      Date in a news site too old      Date in URL may help      No date**

DOES THE CONTENT APPEAR GOOD QUALITY?

- Are **sources documented** in footnotes, or links outside that work?
- **Links to more information?** Any **dead links**?
- Links to **other points of view**?
- Black/violent background or other evidence of **hype/trash/ranting**?

WHAT DO OTHERS SAY ABOUT THE PAGE?

- Who links to it? Who owns it? Paste the URL into **http://alexa.com**
- **Google the author's name** and see what company you're in

WHY WAS IT PUT ON THE WEB? WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PAGE?

**inform with facts/data?    share/disclose?    entice/sell?    explain/persuade?    dupe/rant/satire?**

OTHER SEARCH ENGINES FOR SECOND OPINIONS:

- **search.yahoo.com**
- **ask.com**

TRY IN SUBJECT DIRECTORIES – SMALLER, CHOSEN BY HUMANS, NOT COMPUTER ROBOT PROGRAMS

- **Infomine** (<http://infomine.ucr.edu>)
- **Librarians' Internet Index** (<http://lii.org>)
- **Google Directory** (<http://directory.google.com>)